

Message Text

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11

ACTION AF-06

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R 231330Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5186

INFO USUN NEW YORK 0592

AMEMBASSY KIGALI UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0059

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, BY, US

SUBJECT: TALK WITH PRESIDENT MICOMBERO ON BILATERAL RELATIONS

REF BUJUMBURA 19

1. PRESIDENT MICOMBERO ON JANUARY 22 SUMMONED SOVIET, FRENCH, EGYPTIAN, AND AMERICAN AMBASSADORS PLUS ZAIRIAN CHARGE TO SEPARATE MEETINGS, AT SOME OF WHICH FONMIN BWAKIRA ALSO PRESENT. HE IS APPARENTLY SEEING BELGIAN, GERMAN, AND PERHAPS OTHER MISSION CHIEFS TODAY. CHECK WITH SOME OTHER DIPLOMATS INDICATES THAT ANGOLA WAS COMMON THEME OF TALKS, BUT OTHER SUBJECTS WERE SOMETIMES BROACHED.

2. ON ANGOLA, AT LEAST WITH EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR AND ME, MICOMBERO STRUCK NO NEW THEME. WHILE HE AGAIN PINNED HIS PRO-MPLA STAND ON SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION, HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOTHING AGAINST UNITA AND FNLA AS SUCH. APART FROM THIS VAGUE HINT OF FLEXIBILITY, HE WAS CONTENT TO LISTEN TO MY EXPOSITION OF RATIONALE BEHIND U.S. POSITION IN CONTEXT OF GLOBAL SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP. HE DID NOT RPT NOT TRY TO CONVINCE ANY AMBASSADOR THAT MORE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD RECOGNIZE MPLA, BUT MAY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO GET SOME NEW IDEAS ON HOW BURUNDI CAN GET OFF HOOK OF ZAIRIAN AND RWANDAN DISPLEASURE.

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RWANDAN AMBASSADOR IN BUJUMBURA HAS SAID HIS GOVERNMENT IS QUITE UPSET WITH UNILATERAL BURUNDI BEHAVIOR, AND WE HEAR REPORTS THAT

ZAIRE REPRESENTATIVE AT JANUARY 19 TRIPARTITE FORMIN TALKS IN KIGALI BERATED BURUNDI AND THEN LEFT COMMITTEE BEFORE FINISHING DISCUSSION OF AGENDA OR SETTING DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

3. OVER HALF OF MY 45 MINUTES WITH MICOMBERO WAS DEVOTED TO BILATERAL QUESTIONS. PRESIDENT REITERATED POINTS MADE JANUARY 11 (REFTEL). HIS GREATEST EMPHASIS WAS ON IMPORTANCE OF START TO AMERICAN BILATERAL AID PROGRAM IN BURUNDI, WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF PRIORITIES IN BURUNDI'S PLAN. HE COULD NOT RPT NOT ACCEPT IDEA THAT AMERICAN ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE CONDITIONAL ON BURUNDI'S PROMISE TO IMPROVE ITS UNGA VOTING RECORD ON POLITICAL ISSUES FROM U.S. VIEWPOINT, BUT HE WAS SURE THAT ONCE AID STARTED AND BECAME VISIBLE TO PEOPLE, THERE WOULD BE A MUCH BETTER BASIS FOR FULL ADVANCE BRIEFING OF BURUNDI OFFICIALS BEFORE CRITICAL POLITICAL QUESTIONS CAME UP IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS.

4. PRESIDENT WANTED TO KNOW SPECIFICALLY WHETHER U.S. WAS "PUNISHING" BURUNDI OR OTHER COUNTRIES FOR UNGA VOTES LAST FALL. I SAID THAT SOME ACTIONS WERE BEING TAKEN IN A NUMBER OF WAYS TO SHOW AMERICAN CONCERN THAT SOME GOVERNMENTS WERE UNWILLING TO GIVE ANY CONSIDERATION TO IMPORTANT U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS. BILATERAL AID PROGRAMS HAD TO BE FOUNDED ON AN IDENTIFICATION OF MUTUAL INTERESTS, NOT RPT NOT JUST ON AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES OF RECIPIENT NATIONS. IN ANY CASE, BURUNDI HAD NOT RPT NOT BEEN INCLUDED AMONG COUNTRIES BEING "PUNISHED", PERHAPS BECAUSE THERE WAS NO ONGOING PROGRAM TO CUT. FONMIN WSKED WHETHER OUR WITHDRAWAL LAST MONTH OF DOLS 60,000 FROM BANK ACCOUNT IN BUJUMBURA DID NOT CONSTITUTE "PUNISHMENT", SINCE FUNDS HAD BEEN EARMARKED FOR AID TO CLINICS. I EXPLAINED THAT SUM HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN FOR TECHNICAL USG ACCOUNTING REASONS, BUT WAS BEING RESTORED FROM ANOTHER APPROPRIATION.

5. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT GRB HAS GOTTEN OUR MESSAGE THAT AID AND POLITICAL PERFORMANCE ARE TO BE LINKED TO SOME DEGREE, AND I NOTED THAT NEW OFFICE IN DEPT WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR THESE ISSUES CAREFULLY. YET BURUNDI WANTS MOST KEENLY TO START AID RELATIONSHIP ANYWAY. AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, ONLY WAY WE CAN EVER FIND OUT DEGREE OF BURUNDI FLEXIBILITY IN UNGA AND ELSEWHERE IS TO START MODEST PROGRAM AND THEN PUSH FOR MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE.
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I STILL BELIEVE FY 1977 IS A GOOD YEAR TO MAKE THE ATTEMPT.
MARK

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